

In the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A method for managing calls of an automatic call distributor, comprising:

receiving a call from a user over a first connection with a first endpoint of the user, the call comprising a request for service;

obtaining presence information of the user and associating the call with the presence information;

placing the call in a queue until a suitable agent becomes available to provide the service to the user;

establishing a virtual contact to hold a place of the call in an order in the queue if the first connection is terminated;

receiving a second call from the user over a second connection~~establishing a second connection with the user;~~

detecting the presence of the user associated with the second connection; and

associating the second connection with the virtual contact using the detected presence of the user.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein receiving a second call from the user over a second connection~~establishing a second connection with the user~~ comprises receiving a second call from the user over a second connection~~establishing a second connection~~ with a second endpoint of the user.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the virtual contact is established after termination of the first connection, wherein the virtual contact comprises information regarding the presence of the user.

5. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
receiving notification from the user to terminate the first connection and hold the place of the call in the order in the queue; and

wherein the virtual contact is established after receipt of the notification.

6. (Original) The method of Claim 5, wherein the notification is received through instant messaging (IM).

7. (Original) The method of Claim 5, wherein the notification is received through short message service (SMS) text messaging.

8. (Original) The method of Claim 5, wherein the notification is received through dual tone multiple frequency (DTMF) signaling.

9. (Original) The method of Claim 5, wherein the notification is received through speech recognition.

10. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising updating the user of a status of the virtual contact in the queue.

11. (Original) The method of Claim 10, wherein updating the user of a status of the virtual contact in the queue comprises updating the user of the status through instant messaging.

12. (Original) The method of Claim 10, wherein updating the user of a status of the virtual contact in the queue comprises updating the user of the status through short message service text messaging.

13. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising querying the user whether the user desires to wait for a suitable agent over the first connection or establish the virtual contact to hold a place of the call in an order in the queue and terminate the first connection.

14. (Currently Amended) A system for managing calls of an automatic call distributor, comprising:

at least one interface port operable to receive a call from a user over a first connection with a first endpoint of the user, the call comprising a request for service;

a queue operable to retain the call until a suitable agent becomes available to provide the service to the user;

a processor operable to:

establish a virtual contact to hold a place of the call in an order in the queue if the first connection is terminated; and

receive a second call from the user over a second connection~~establish a second connection with the user;~~

a presence server operable to:

obtain presence information of the user and associate the call with the presence information; and

detect the presence of the user associated with the second connection; and

the processor being further operable to associate the second connection with the virtual contact using the detected presence of the user.

15. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 14, wherein the processor is operable to receive the second call from the user over a second connection~~establish the second connection with a second endpoint of the user.~~

16. (Canceled)

17. (Original) The system of Claim 14, wherein the processor is operable to establish the virtual contact after termination of the first connection, wherein the virtual contact comprises information regarding the presence of the user.

18. (Original) The system of Claim 14, wherein:

the at least one interface port is further operable to receive notification from the user to terminate the first connection and hold the place of the call in the order in the queue; and

the processor is operable to establish the virtual contact after receipt of the notification.

19. (Original) The system of Claim 18, wherein the notification is received through instant messaging (IM).

20. (Original) The system of Claim 18, wherein the notification is received through short message service (SMS) text messaging.

21. (Original) The system of Claim 18, wherein the notification is received through dual tone multiple frequency (DTMF) signaling.

22. (Original) The system of Claim 18, wherein the notification is received through speech recognition.

23. (Original) The system of Claim 14, wherein the processor is further operable to update the user of a status of the virtual contact in the queue.

24. (Original) The system of Claim 23, wherein the processor is further operable to update the user of the status through instant messaging.

25. (Original) The system of Claim 23, wherein the processor is further operable to update the user of the status through short message service text messaging.

26. (Original) The system of Claim 14, wherein the processor is further operable to query the user whether the user desires to wait for a suitable agent over the first connection or establish the virtual contact to hold a place of the call in an order in the queue and terminate the first connection.

27. (Currently Amended) A system for managing calls of an automatic call distributor, comprising:

means for receiving a call from a user over a first connection with a first endpoint of the user, the call comprising a request for service;

means for obtaining presence information of the user and associating the call with the presence information;

means for placing the call in a queue until a suitable agent becomes available to provide the service to the user;

means for establishing a virtual contact to hold a place of the call in an order in the queue if the first connection is terminated;

means for receiving a second call from the user over a second connection~~establishing a second connection with the user~~;

means for detecting the presence of the user associated with the second connection; and

means for associating the second connection with the virtual contact using the detected presence of the user.

28. (Original) The system of Claim 27, wherein the virtual contact is established after termination of the first connection, wherein the virtual contact comprises information regarding the presence of the user.

29. (Original) The system of Claim 27, further comprising:
means for receiving notification from the user to terminate the first connection and hold the place of the call in the order in the queue; and
wherein the virtual contact is established after receipt of the notification.

30. (Original) The system of Claim 27, further comprising means for updating the user of a status of the virtual contact in the queue.

31. (Original) The system of Claim 27, further comprising means for querying the user whether the user desires to wait for a suitable agent over the first connection or establish

the virtual contact to hold a place of the call in an order in the queue and terminate the first connection.

32. (Currently Amended) A computer program comprising software~~Software~~ embodied in a computer readable medium, the computer readable medium comprising code operable to:

receive a call from a user over a first connection with a first endpoint of the user, the call comprising a request for service;

obtain presence information of the user and associate the call with the presence information;

place the call in a queue until a suitable agent becomes available to provide the service to the user;

establish a virtual contact to hold a place of the call in an order in the queue if the first connection is terminated;

receive a second call from the user over a second connection~~establish a second connection with the user;~~

detect the presence of the user associated with the second connection; and

associate the second connection with the virtual contact using the detected presence of the user.

33. (Original) The medium of Claim 32, wherein the virtual contact is established after termination of the first connection, wherein the virtual contact comprises information regarding the presence of the user.

34. (Original) The medium of Claim 32, wherein:
the code is further operable to receive notification from the user to terminate the first connection and hold the place of the call in the order in the queue; and
the virtual contact is established after receipt of the notification.

35. (Original) The medium of Claim 32, wherein the code is further operable to update the user of a status of the virtual contact in the queue.

36. (Original) The medium of Claim 32, wherein the code is further operable to query the user whether the user desires to wait for a suitable agent over the first connection or

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establish the virtual contact to hold a place of the call in an order in the queue and terminate the first connection.

37. (Original) A method for managing calls of an automatic call distributor, comprising:

receiving a call from a user over a connection, the call comprising a request for service;

obtaining presence information of the user and associating the call with the presence information;

establishing a virtual contact to hold a place of the call in an order in a queue if the connection is terminated;

wherein the user may cycle between a call only state, a call and presence state and a presence only state, while maintaining the place of the call in the order in the queue.

38. (New) A method for managing calls of an automatic call distributor, comprising:

receiving a call from a user over a first connection with a first endpoint of the user, the call comprising a request for service;

obtaining presence information of the user and associating the call with the presence information;

placing the call in a queue until a suitable agent becomes available to provide the service to the user;

establishing a virtual contact to hold a place of the call in an order in the queue if the first connection is terminated;

updating the user of a status of the virtual contact in the queue before the virtual contact reaches a head of the queue;

establishing a second connection with the user;

detecting the presence of the user associated with the second connection; and

associating the second connection with the virtual contact using the detected presence of the user.